

Champions Club



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Boys' No. 1: Gordon Watson	2
Girls' No. 1: Caitlyn Williams	2
Rawlins, Adams Players of Month	3
CCS Sweeps Champions Titles	3
A Champions Tip From Eric Voges	4
Andrews Among Spring 'Champs'	4



National Open: Entrants By State

24 — Tennessee (10 boys, 14 girls)
 21 — Georgia (11 boys, 10 girls)
 11 — Florida (10 boys, 1 girl)
 9 — Indiana (6 boys, 3 girls)
 6 — New York; 5 — Kentucky, New Jersey
 4 — Pennsylvania, Virginia; 3 — Illinois,
 Massachusetts, North Carolina
 2 — Connecticut, Maryland, Michigan, Ne-
 vada, Ohio; 1 — Alabama, Colorado, Louisi-
 ana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Wisconsin

Speaking of Champions ...

Volume 6, Issue 3

July-September
2006

Young 'Firecrackers' Create Holiday Bang

Could it possibly get much better than this?

Holiday weekend with fireworks, beautiful facility, young tennis prodigies ... ?

Of course not!

The National Open 12s fireworks will explode as 64 boys and 50 girls brace for Southern heat on and off the courts at the Champions Club July 1-5.

Gordon Watson III of Naples, Fla., is the top seed among the boys, followed by No. 2 Conrad Harron of Chicago, No. 3 Maxx Lipman of Nashville and Lakeland, Fla.'s Danny Mack, seeded

fourth.

Knoxville's Caitlyn Williams is the girls' No. 1 seed, followed by No. 2 Julie Vrabel of Centreville, Va., No. 3 Megan Kurey of Alpharetta, Ga., and No. 4 Tess Bernard-Feigenbaum of New York City.

The top three singles finishers in each earn berths into the USTA National Championships.



Boys' top seed Gordon Watson of Naples, Fla., rips a big forehand

Boys' No. 1: Gordon Watson



Gordon Watson III is quick to admit he's never stepped foot on Tennessee soil.

Nonetheless, the Naples, Fla., 12 year old arrives in the Volunteer State and invades the Champions Club with all eyes focused on his every move. The young stranger won't be a stranger too long.

Florida's No. 1 tennis player in Boys 12s is the top seed for singles for the

National Open 12s Championship set for July 1-5 at Champions. Although Gordon has carted home National Open titles in his past, he's never been the No. 1 seed – the boy with the bulls' eye on his chest – in any national event.

"I'm playing my best tennis right now, I'd say," Gordon points out. "Being the No. 1 seed, though, is a different kind of pressure. When you're the No. 1, you're expected to beat everyone, but that's not what always happens."

Gordon is ranked 20th nationally, which is a

personal best. He carries a 62-9 record.

On the other hand, Gordon isn't all about tennis. He enjoys dirt-biking, hunting, surfing, fishing, golfing and his dog, Skid.

But tennis has been a part of his life since he could walk.

Honestly.

"I picked (tennis) up a couple of months after I could walk, I'm told," Gordon says.

His dad, Gordon II, recalls his son's first experiences with the game.

"I can picture him and his mom (Pam) with little Bo-Bo paddles and balloons," the elder Watson notes. "Gordon picked it right up and fell in love with tennis. Then we used to play after school and he kept improving."

Gordon's dad – a former No. 1-ranked adult doubles player in the Sunshine State – became his coach.

"I just loved the sport," young Gordon explains. "My dad made it so much fun for me and it just was an awesome game. And I really believe my game is getting better."

In his most recent tournament, the Florida State Closed Junior Championships in Altamonte Springs, Gordon clicked off six consecutive wins without dropping one set.

"It was a big confidence builder for him," admits the dad. "Gordon's still young, still learning, but he's got an all-around game and he's getting better."

In a twist of irony, Gordon won May's National Open in Columbus, Ga., as the event's No. 2 seed. The top seed was Conrad Harron of Chicago, now seeded second for the July fireworks at Champions.



Gordon Watson & "doubles partner" Skid after winning singles and doubles in the February National Open in Columbus, Ga.

Girls' No. 1: Caitlyn Williams

Caitlyn Williams just never had a chance, which turned out to be just the way she wanted it.

Her dad, Bob, is a former tennis standout at Baylor School and Duke University. Her mom, Michelle, earned All-America honors at the University of Tennessee and played the pro tour as a Top 100 player.

Her granddad, Mike DePalmer Sr. (Michelle's dad) coached UT for 14 seasons and guided the Vols to the NCAA final.

Caitlyn's 22-year-old sister, Jennifer, just finished playing for Birmingham Southern, and 15-year-old brother Rhyne is one of the nation's top junior players and may be awarded the opportunity to play in the 2006 U.S. Open Junior Championships.

Tennis, tennis, tennis.

Little Caitlyn never really had the chance to sidestep the game.

"Didn't want to," the Knoxville 11 year old explains. "I've played a lot of basketball up until this year, but my mom said I had to pick one of the sports, so I picked tennis. I love basketball, but I really love tennis."

Caitlyn Williams steps onto the Champions

Club courts on the first day of July as the No. 1 seed in the girls' singles draw of the National Open 12s Championships. She's ranked ninth nationally.

"I feel kind of good about it," Caitlyn says of being the top seed. "It's not really more pressure. You still have to go out and play your game and my game has been doing well. My mom has been working with me a lot. She's my coach right now and she's been helping me with pretty much everything."

"It's great that the entire family can participate in (tennis) together," says Michelle. "Caitlyn works very hard on her tennis and is just trying to improve her game and have fun in the process."

Caitlyn is no stranger to national events or National Opens. She's already claimed finishes of fourth and fifth in 12s singles and a sixth-place wrap-up in a 14s Open. And she won a National Open doubles title in November.

As the top seed, now she sets her sights on finishing No. 1.

"It won't be easy. It never is," Caitlyn

says. "And that's the way it's supposed to be."

Michelle says tennis was Caitlyn's choice.

"I introduced all my children to so many other sports. I didn't want them to feel they had to play tennis and they ended up asking me, 'Why don't we play tennis, Mom?'"

"As for Caitlyn, I actually had her in ballet and playing tennis just once a week," remembers Michelle, "and she begged me to drop the ballet and play tennis every day."

Caitlyn got her way and the Williams' family got another star.



Tennessee's Caitlyn Williams sets up to smack a backhand

RAWLINS, ADAMS JUNIOR PLAYERS OF THE MONTH

Josh Rawlins

Age/Birthday/Zodiac Sign: 18/June 1/Gemini

School/Grade: Lookout Valley High School/Senior

Favorite Subject: Math

Favorite Restaurant/Food: Arby's/spaghetti

Favorite Movie: Grandma's Boy

Favorite Type of Music/Favorite Music Artist: Country/Toby Keith

Hobbies Outside Of Tennis: Video games, playing with my dog

Who Introduced You To Tennis? Brandon Rawlins (brother)

Began Playing Tennis: Four years ago

Favorite Shot: Forehand

Favorite Pro Players: Rafael Nadal (male), Maria Sharapova (female)

Tennis Racquet You Use: Babolat Pure Drive Team Plus

Best Tennis Memory/Highlight: "My best memory would be this past spring tennis season playing with my friends, Justin Dempsey and Tanner Stancil."

Eddie Baker (Champions Club) on Josh: "Josh has come on strong lately, improving on all facets of the game, particularly bettering his serve and forehand. His best days are yet to come."



Josh Rawlins

Josh Adams

Age/Birthday/Zodiac Sign: 11/July 14/Cancer

School/Grade: Dade Middle/7th

Favorite Subject: History

Favorite Restaurant/Food: Little Caesars/Crazy bread

Favorite Movie: Star Wars

Favorite Type of Music/Favorite Musical Artist: Easy rock

Hobbies Outside Of Tennis: Swimming

Who Introduced You To Tennis? My mom (Debbie) and dad (Rocky)

Began Playing Tennis: One-and-one-half years ago

Favorite Shot: Volley

Favorite Pro Players: Andre Agassi (male), Maria Sharapova (female)

Tennis Racquet You Use: Wilson

Best Tennis Memory/Highlight: "It was when I hit a forehand winner against both my mom and dad."

Rocky (Josh's dad) on Josh: "Josh is very enthusiastic and passionate about the game of tennis. He has good forehand and backhand strokes. Josh has potential to become a good player."



Josh Adams

Chattanooga Christian Twice A Champ

Chattanooga Christian School tennis coach Sue Webb didn't really know what to expect from her boys' and girls' squads battling in their first Champions Club High School Classic.

A blowout? A nail-biter?

So Webb got a little of both. The Chargers took care of business in the Boys' A Division, piling up 63 points to 49 for runner-up Walker Valley of Charleston, Tenn.

On the other hand, the Lady Chargers and Walker Valley battled to the wire with CCS escaping with a one-point advantage in Girls' A, 59-58. The Lady Mustangs led 54-51 heading into the final two rounds of doubles on the final day — which just happened to be the date of Walker Valley's prom.

It was a couple of weeks later that the Chattanooga Christian girls claimed the TSSAA Class A-AA state title, blasting Knoxville Catholic by 4-0 in the team semis and polishing off David Lipscomb, 4-1, in the final. Walker Valley made the Class AAA field, but bowed out to Memphis Houston, 4-1, in the semis.

Houston blanked Knoxville Farragut, 4-0, for the crown.

The CCS boys lost in the A-AA state championship match to University School of Jackson, 4-1.

'06 Champions Classic Team Scores

Boys A

Chatt. Christian 63
Walker Valley 49
McMinn County 45
Soddy-Daisy 40
Red Bank 38
USN 38
Rhea County 32
Cleveland 16
Boys B
Ooltewah 21
SAS 19
Grace Academy 13
Lookout Valley 1

Girls A

Chatt. Christian 59
Walker Valley 58
Siegel 49
Red Bank 47
McMinn County 39
Soddy-Daisy 27
Ooltewah 26
Cleveland 17
Girls B
Bradley Central 22
SAS 15
Rhea County 14
Blackman 2

McMinn County finished third, Soddy-Daisy fourth and University School of Nashville and Red Bank deadlocked for fifth in the eight-team Champions Club Boys' A field..

Murfreesboro Siegel ended third, defending champion Red Bank fourth and McMinn County fifth in the Girls' A bracket.

In the four-team B Divisions, the Bradley Central girls defended their crown, while Ooltewah slipped past the St. Andrews-Sewanee Mountain Lions of Monteagle Mountain, 21-19, for the boys' title.

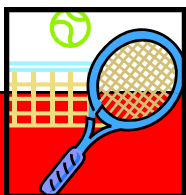
Champions Club

Address:
P.O. Box 6
Lupton City, TN 37351-0006

Phone:
(423) 870-3112

Fax:
(423) 870-4224

Email:
baker_eddie@mail.chattanooga.gov



**Discover the
Champion in
yourself!**

We're on the web:
[www.chattanooga.gov/
PRAC/30_257.htm](http://www.chattanooga.gov/PRAC/30_257.htm)

A Champions Tip ...

From Eric Voges

Tournament Director, National Open 12s



The Point Of Contact!!!

Point of contact is very important in striking the ball and being able to dictate where that ball lands. You want your point of contact to be as consistent as possible. You want to hit the ball for your ground-strokes close to waist level and out in front.



As your tennis game improves, and you look for ways to continue hitting the ball harder while keeping it in play, try this during your next practice, beginning in the warm-up:

Try hitting for 10 minutes where you say "yes" every time you have a good contact point, and you say "no" every time it drops too low or gets too high or gets behind you.

You will find that your footwork improves, as well as your consistency.

Champions Club's Zach Smith (pictured at left) demonstrates the point of contact

Andrews Last One Standing In Battle Of 3.0 Unbeatens

It was quite a strange predicament for three of the dozen Men's 3.0 singles competitors in the Champions Club's 2006 Spring Leagues.

Oddly enough following seven regular-season matches in the round-robin 3.0 league, Matthew Shawcross, Shaun Millsaps and Blane Andrews — a trio of Champions newcomers — all finished undefeated heading into the playoffs.

Shawcross earned the No. 1 seed by winning 84 of 97 games played throughout the season. Millsaps was No. 2 (84 of 103 won) and Andrews No. 3 (80 of 98 won, but losing one set).

However, Andrews first knocked out Millsaps, then escaped Shawcross for the crown, 2-6, 7-5, 10-4 tie-break.

However, only three other leagues have crowned champions.

Betty Curry and Janet Lawrence, seeded fourth, claimed the Women's 6.0-6.5 doubles title with a 4-6, 6-1, 7-5 decision over No. 3 Ginger Oxenhandler-Mary Lou Wadley. Curry and Lawrence avenged a loss in the semis to the top-seeded duo of Darlene

Frank-Sheila Maier, pulling out a 6-4, 1-6, 10-6 clash.

Sylvie and John Bouchard, recent arrivals from Tampa, Fla., finished unbeaten in the Mixed 7.0-7.5 doubles playoffs, edging Emily Breeding-Ron Bond in the final, 7-6 (5), 6-4. In the Mixed 6.0-6.5 title match, Bonnie and John Milliard rallied from behind to upend Gina and Tom Self, 2-6, 6-4, 10-6 tie-break.

Champions "veterans" Blair Lamey and Pat Farnsley will collide for the 4.0 singles crown, which is the same story for unbeaten Brian Watkins and Chad Frank in 4.5 singles. Spanky Rorex and Tanner Stancil, seeded fourth, knocked out top seed and previously undefeated Kevin Cross-Dana Burditt in a three-setter to advance to the Men's 6.0-6.5 doubles title match against Wes Wood-Quentin Tugman.

In women's play, unbeaten and top seed Angela Smith and No. 3 Nicci Wyatt tangle for the 3.0 crown, while Cindy Kedrowski and Laura Groce collide in the 3.5 finale. Mary Skahan is the unbeaten top seed in 4.0.